**Unit Title:** Hard Love by Ellen Wittlinger

**Day Title:** Getting Unstuck

**Lesson Outcome:**

Students will be able to:

* Learn new activities for generating writing ideas
* Work with a group of peers
* Practice their improvisational skills
* Utilize basic grammar knowledge
* Create a piece of writing based on unformed/rough ideas

**Standards:**

CE 1.1.2 - Know and use a variety of prewriting strategies to generate, focus, and organize ideas.

CE 1.2.2 - Write, speak, and visually represent to develop self-awareness and insight.

CE 1.3.7 - Participate collaboratively and productively in groups - fulfilling roles and responsibilities, posing relevant questions, giving and following instructions, acknowledging and building on ideas and contributions of others to answer questions or to solve problems, and offering dissent courteously.

**Materials Needed:** laminated pictures, a handful of the teacher's "bad" poems cut into lines, legal-size paper, writing utensil, blank self-made “mad-libs”

**Launch:** Class Discussion about “getting unstuck”

* Write on the board or on an overhead: “When you have writer’s block, how do you get unstuck?”
* Ask students to think for a moment and then talk with the person next to them
* Give them five minutes or so
* Come together as a class to share their answers – eight minutes or so
* Introduce the stations that are set up around the room

**Learning Activity:**

Students have ten minutes at each station.

*Storyboard*: Students work together to tell a story through the use of an assortment of unrelated pictures. Each student chooses one picture. A student needs to volunteer to begin, weaving his/her picture into a story. Students do not need to go in any particular order, just jump in when they believe they can effectively weave their picture into the story.

*“Bad” Poetry*: Students can work in pairs or individually. The purpose of this activity is to rearrange snippets of a poem to create a new poem. The students may cut up and use “bad” poems they wrote or they may use the snippets of my “bad” poems.

*Mad-Libs*: Students fill in the blanks with the appropriate type of word, i.e. noun, plural noun, verb, adjective, etc.

*StoryJump*: Students work together to write a short story one sentence at a time. The catch? They can only see the sentence written immediately before theirs.

* Step 1: Student A writes the first two sentences of the story then folds the paper so only the second sentence shows.
* Step 2: Student B writes one sentence and folds the paper so only his/her sentence shows
* Repeat step 2 until each student has a turn. (Students may each go twice to produce a longer story.)

**Assessment:**

Students may take a rough piece of writing, idea, or some other form of inspiration from one or more of the station activities to develop into a finished piece of writing.

* They could expand upon their mad-libs story or their storyjump story, adding information and details.
* They could re-write their own "bad" poetry or re-write "bad" poetry from a classmate or poet of their choice.
* They can use any genre of writing i.e. short story, poetry, comics, drama, etc.

Mad-Libs: A Familiar Fairytale?

(Fill in the first column and then the second column. Some answers are used more than once, I noted these with numbers. For example the same noun should be used for all "Noun 2" blanks.)

Noun ­­­­­­­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name 1 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Noun \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Noun \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Verb (past tense) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Type of Liquid 1 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Type of Liquid 1 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Adjective \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Type of Liquid 1 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Adjective \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Type of Liquid 1 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Adjective \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Verb (past tense) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Adjective \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Noun 2 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Adjective \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Adjective \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Adjective \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Noun 2 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Verb (past tense) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Place/Location \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Noun 3 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Adjective \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Noun 3 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Adjective \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Noun 3 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Adjective \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Noun 4 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Noun 1 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Noun 2 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name 1 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Noun 3 (plural) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name 1 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Noun 4 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phrase/Expression \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Verb (past tense) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mad-Libs: A Familiar Fairytale?

Once upon a time, there was a little \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ named\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. She went for a walk in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Pretty soon, she came upon a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. She \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, but no one answered. So, she walked right in. At the table in the kitchen, there were three bowls of\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. She tasted the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ from the first bowl. "This is too\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_!" she exclaimed. So, she tasted the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_from the second bowl. "This is too \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_," she said. So, she tasted the last bowl of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. "Ahhh, this is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, just the way I like it" she said happily and she \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ it all up. After she ate, she decided she was feeling a little \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. So, she walked into the living room where she saw three \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Goldilocks sat on the first one. "This is too \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_!" she exclaimed. So she sat on the second one." This is too \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_!" she whined. So she tried the last one."Ahhh, this is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_," she sighed. But just as she sat down, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_! She was very tired by this time, so she went to the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. She lay down on the first \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, but it was too \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Then she lay on the second \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, but it was too \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Then she lay on the third \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and it was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. She fell asleep. As she slept, the three \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ arrived. They found their \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, asleep on their \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Just then, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ woke up and saw the three \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. She screamed, "\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_!" And she \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, running for her life.

THE END